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Message Text

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PAGE 01 RIYADH 00536 060729Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CA-01 TRSE-00 DODE-00 /012 W
----------028588 060740Z /17
O R 060600Z JUL 78
FM USLO RIYADH
TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 563

UNCLAS RIYADH 536

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: CGEN, SA
SUBJECT: IDENTIFICATION PAPERS FOR FOREIGNERS

REF (A) RIYADH 521, (B) RIYADH 458

USLO HAS RECEIVED CLARIFICATION AND UPDATING OF IMPENDING IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES FROM INTERIOR MINISTRY DEPUTY MINISTER DR. IBRAHIM AL-AWAJI.

1. ONLY MEN NEED CONCERN THEMSELVES ABOUT PROOF OF LEGAL ENTRY AND WORK AUTHORIZATION. WOMEN AND CHILDREN ASSUME THE STATUS OF THEIR HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, AND NEED NOT CARRY SPECIFIC IDENTIFICATION OF THEIR OWN. THIXKIS NOT TO SUGGEST THAT PROPER RESIDENCY DOCUMENTATION FOR THEM IS NOT NECESSARY, ONLY THAT THE PAPERS NEED NOT BE CARRIED ON THEIR PERSON.

2. SAG STOPPED ISSUING RESIDENCY BOOKS SOME MONTHS AGO, AND MOVED INSTEAD TO THE STAMPING IN PASSPORTS OF RESIDENCY AND WORK PERMITS. TESIDENCY BOOKS, PASSPORTS WITH RESIDENCY AND WORK PERMIT STAMPS, AND COMPANY IDENTITY CARDS WILL BE ACCEPTABLE PROOF OF LEGAL ENTRY AND WORK AUTHORIZATION. THESE NEED NOT BE IN ARABIC.

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3. WORK PERMITS ARE STAMPED IN PASSPORTS AND INCLUDE A STATEMENT AUTHORIZING RESIDENCY DURING PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT. THE FAMILY IS ADDED TO THE HEAD OF FAMVLY'S PERMIT, IF THEY ARE ALLOWED TO ACCOMPANY OR JOIN HIM. WORK PERMITS FOR WOMEN WILL NOT BE GRANTED, EXCEPT FOR TEACHING, NURSING, SOCIAL WORK, AND SIMILARLY ACCEPTED WOMEN'S PROFESSIONS. SECRETARIAL WORK IS EXPLICITLY

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EXCLUDED FROM THE PERMITTED TYPE OF WOMEN'S WORK.

4. SAUDI PASSPORT OFFICES WILL BEGIN ISSUING A NEW IDENTITY CARD FOR FOREIGNERS THURSDAY, JULY 6. APPLICATIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT EVERY PASSPORT OFFICE AS OF THURSDAY. THE NEW CARDS ARE INTENDED AS A UNIVERSAL IDENTITY DOCUMENT FOR EXPATRIATES, ULTIMATELY REPLACING THE VARIOUS EMPLOYER CARDS, THE RESIDENCY BOOKS, OR THE NEED TO PRODUCE A PASSPORT WITH APPROPRIATE STAMPS TO PROVE LEGAL STATUS. ONLY MEN NEED APPLY, AND NO DATE HAS BEEN SET WHEN THESE CARDS WILL BE THE SOLE PROOF OF IDENTITY AND STATUS.

5. AL-AWAJI REPORTS THAT THE IDENTITY CARD CHECK PROGRAM AT LEAST IN RIYADH WILL BEGIN CAUTIOUSLY. SOME FIRMS WILL BE VISITED BY IDENTITY INSPECTORS, BUT NOT ALL EMPLOYEES WILL NECESSARILY BE CHECKED. AL-AWAJI EMPHASIZED THAT WESTERNERS HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR, AND THAT FEW WOULD EVEN BE CHECKED, AFTER THE INITIAL PREOCESS OF CHECKING BECOMES INSTITUTIONALIZED.
GRANDINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978RIYADH00536
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780276-1204
Format: TEL
From: RIYADH
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
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Line Count: 83
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7867827a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 RIYADH 521, 78 RIYADH 458
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2103067
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IDENTIFICATION PAPERS FOR FOREIGNERS
TAGS: CGEN, SA
To: JIDDA DHAHRAN
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7867827a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014